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## THE JONES BEQUEST TO THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

BY GILBERT R. REDGRAVE.

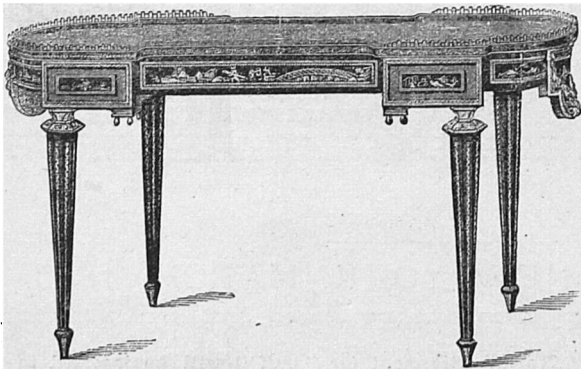
THE most recent addition to the art collections of London is the magnificent bequest of Mr. John Jones, who died in January of last year, (1882), and who by his will, dated December 4th, 1879, left to the English nation, furniture, porcelain and enamels valued at £300,000. We are justified in speaking of this legacy as one of the most splendid ever known, and the gift is probably the most valuable one ever made by a private individual to his country. Mr. Jones had long been regarded as a shrewd collector of art treasures, and as one who rarely allowed mere money value to prevent him from acquiring any object to which he had taken a fancy. For Sèvres porcelain of the best and rarest quality; for fine miniatures by Petitot; for the admirable inlaid French furniture of the latter part of the last century, Mr. Jones frequently paid what were considered fabulous prices, and not a few among the writing tables and the cabinets now shown at South Kensington, cost their fortunate possessor from £2,000 to £5,000, ere he could silence rival biddings at Christie's auction rooms. For a collection of the size of that bequeathed by Mr. Jones, the number of first-rate specimens in each of the special departments over which it ranges is, indeed, marvellous. There are, in all, 858 objects, including the pictures, and 780 volumes of books. The great wealth of the collection consists in the china, and in the inlaid furniture and ormolu work. There are no less than 135 pieces of furniture, 52 bronze and ormolu ornaments, and 16 clocks. Of Sèvres porcelain, among which are comprised some fine vases, bowls, cabarets, écuelles, plaques, and cups and saucers, there are 89 pieces, together with 58 objects in Chelsea, Dresden and Oriental porcelain. These, with 105 oil paintings, 19 water colors, 137 miniatures and enamels, 138 objects chiefly in precious metals, and 109 pieces of sculpture, may be treated of as the main groups represented by the Jones bequest.

Mr. Jones was essentially a self-made man, a tailor in Regent street, where he set up in business in 1825, and retired in 1850, retaining a share in the business as the silent partner. In the account of him given us in the official hand-book to the collection, he is stated to have "lived a very quiet and retired life; he was a great walker, and did not keep any horses or carriage; his circle of acquaintance was not large; his habits were regular and abstemious, and his health almost invariably good." He died on the 7th January, 1882, at about 82 years of age.

He left an estate valued at nearly £400,000, and the residue of his property, which will be little short of £70,000, goes to the Convalescent Hospital, at Ventnor, Isle of Wight. So much for his personal history, and now a brief account of some of the more remarkable of the many treasures he gave "for the benefit of the nation," to the South Kensington Museum.

Perhaps we may be excused for turning first to that which will be more particularly interesting, we think, to our own readers, the furniture. There is probably nothing finer in France than the large armoire which is, doubtless, the master-piece of Boulle, executed from the designs of Berain for Louis XIV. The delicacy and beauty of the coloring of the inlaid brass work, in metal of two tints, the boldness of the arabesque work, and the fine proportions and unusual size of the cabinet, entitles it to the place of honor, and we are somewhat sorry to find that it has been separated from the other furniture in the collection. This, with another smaller cabinet, is Boulle work, sometimes written "buhl," though among the choicest objects in this category will probably have less interest for the general public than the inlaid furniture, some of which has an added claim to attention in consequence of having undoubtedly belonged to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette. If we have to select one piece more than another for special notice, we should give the preference to the

superb *escritoire de toilette*, a small writing table for a lady's boudoir, probably made by Riesener or Oeben. This dainty little table, as a mere matter of value, would probably fetch about thrice its weight in gold. It is throughout a model of the finest art workmanship, within and without; the beautiful marquetry panels; the elaborately chased metal mounts; the choice little porcelain toilette requisites might each form the subject of a special essay. The table has only to be seen to be coveted.



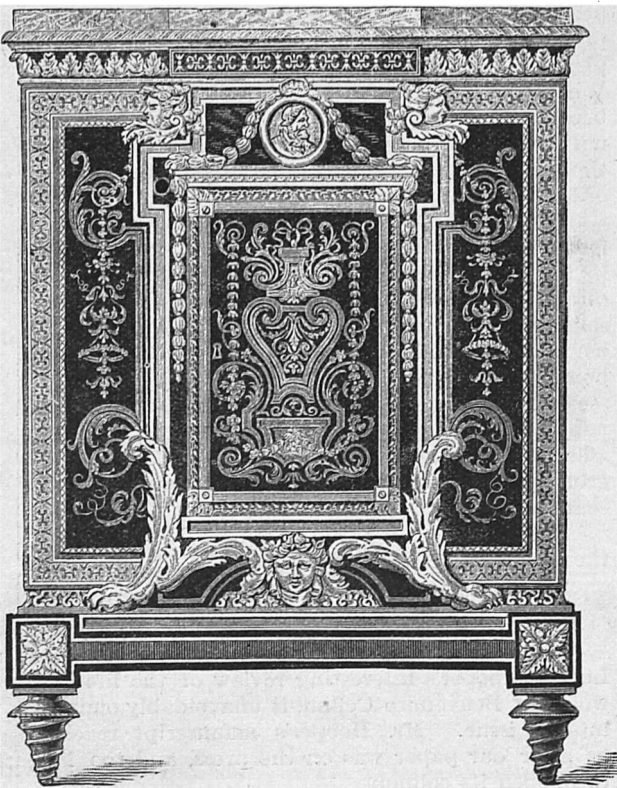
It is impossible to deny, after a stroll through this room-full of furniture, that towards the end of the last century the art of the cabinet-maker in France, attained its zenith. We are convinced that nothing we have seen of this description, before or after, can compare in elegance and beauty with this little *escritoire*, once used by Marie Antoinette, and this is only one among a hundred of cabinets, tables and secretaires, combining the choicest Sèvres inlaid plaques, the beau-

tiful ormolu work of Gouthière and Caffieri, and the wood inlaid work of Riesener and David Roentgen, which are to be seen in this collection. The clocks are scarcely inferior to the furniture, among them is a lyre-clock of old Sèvres porcelain, said to be superior to the one which recently fetched such a high price in the Hamilton sale. Two, at least, have

mounts by Gouthière, and two are ascribed to Caffieri.

The oblong table shown above is enriched with lac panels, and forms a charming piece of cabinet work, valued at a considerable sum.

The beauty of the Sèvres porcelain gathered by Mr. Jones, will impress those whose tastes scarcely lie in that direction, and it will be gratifying to English pride to find how well some of the fine Chelsea vases maintain their position among the matchless productions of Sèvres. The collection of enamels, by Petitot, is certainly the best out of France, and contains some of the finest enamels we have seen from the hand of this master. There



are many splendid gold and enameled snuff-boxes, which amply deserve an extended notice, and the pictures and sculpture are of more than mere passing interest. We have only indicated in these observations a few of the more noticeable treasures, and we hope to revert to the subject at a later date.

We are indebted to the *London Furniture Gazette* for these excellent illustrations.

## ANTIQUE FURNITURE.

BY JAMES THOMSON.

IN the fifteenth century there arose in Italy a style of architecture and decoration, based upon classic antique forms, to which was given the name Renaissance, or revived classic. This new style soon spread to other countries. France, Germany, Spain, England, etc., in each of which it took firm root and flourished. In no country, however, did it attain such perfection as in Italy, the finest period being during the sixteenth century.

While the carving and decoration of this period is executed with much delicacy and refinement, the furniture is too hard and architectural in outline for modern reproduction in its purity, the cabinets and sideboards being in many cases nothing more than temples and house fronts reproduced in miniature.

The German Renaissance, on the other hand, though losing much in refinement and delicacy of detail, still possesses much to commend it, its outlines are massive and dignified, there is a certain rudeness and oddness in its appearance that succeed in imparting to the observer that sense

of feeling, which we may call "effect." Vigorous quaintness distinguishes work of this period, depths and hollows, the importance of light and shade in the arrangement of sculptured ornament, being by them thoroughly understood and practiced, boldly carved egg and tongue ornamentation, acanthus leaves, dentils, and other members of

classical architecture were much used, shelves supported by grotesque figures being a distinguishing feature.

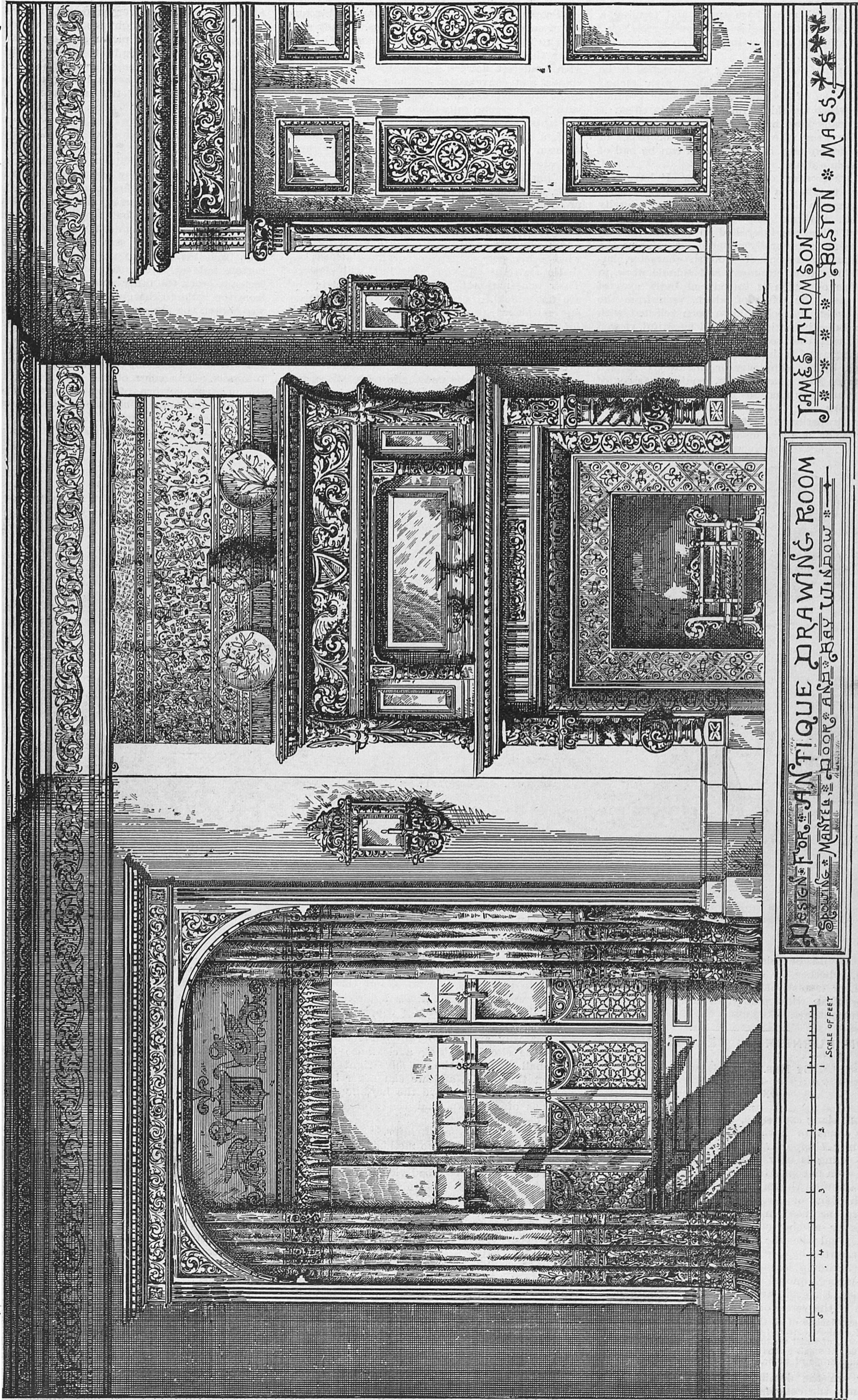
In our present scheme for Antique Drawing Room furnishing, I have, while retaining some of the ornamentation peculiar to the Italian, given prominence to those characteristics which distinguish the German Renaissance from other styles, among which I may mention the heavy bulbous twist turnings, which, when richly and quaintly carved, are very effective.

The woodwork finish of the room is designed to be of cherry stained, a warm red color, the grain well filled and rubbed smooth by the process which is known as *dead finish*, that is, without that high varnish shine, which looks cheap, and is not at all suitable as a finish where it is liable to get scratched and indented.

The mantel should be executed in mahogany, preference being given to that with close flowing grain, this, as well as other furniture, should be stained to match woodwork of room, a bright warm red; mahogany will of itself become darker with age, and this is true, to some extent, of cherry also, but while mahogany, whether stained or left natural color, should always be oiled in order to bring out the full beauty of grain, cherry should never be, the tendency of oil being to give it a dull and muddy look; in the finish of mahogany some red coloring should always be used to kill the natural yellow in the wood, otherwise it will have a sickly, putty appearance, until darkened by the influence of time and sunshine.

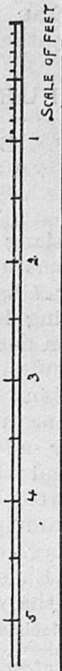
This matter of finishing woodwork is of more importance than some people suppose, in fact it is the most important element in the various processes which go to make up the perfect whole, the appearance of many otherwise well executed works is often marred through the ignorance of the person to whom is intrusted this important duty.

In the over-mantel beveled mirrors should be used as well as in sconces on either side, which should be brass of antique finish; above the mantel is shown a banner suspended from a small brass rod, this serves the double purpose of



DESIGN FOR AN ANTIQUE DRAWING ROOM  
SHOWING MANTEL, DOOR AND BAY WINDOW

JAMES THOMSON  
BOSTON MASS.



covering an otherwise bare space, and forming a background for the display of *plaques, vases, etc.*, the decoration of this is intended to be executed in embroidery.

The facings for fire-opening are designed to be of highly polished brass, enriched with etched ornamentation of geometrical design, the ground-work of which should be finished dead in effect.

The walls may be tinted some neutral color, say bluish gray, the frieze painted, or paper of suitable design may be used, which can be had of any first-class dealer.

In lower sash of bay-window I have endeavored to show a very handsome and decorative feature, which, although not very generally used, has, I think, only to be brought to the attention of people interested in tasteful furnishing to be more generally adopted. I refer to the half blinds or screens of Moorish character, lattices of interlaced ornament and spindle work, in the design of which is introduced bull's eyes of stained glass, the effect of which, seen from the interior when the colors have been selected with taste and discrimination, is indeed beautiful, viewed from without they serve the purpose of breaking the monotony of plain glass; the cost is, of course, governed by the simplicity or intricacy of design used, there being an almost endless variety of patterns and combinations in Moorish and Arabian lattice work.

For draperies, a material in which the prevailing color is blue, of darker shade than the

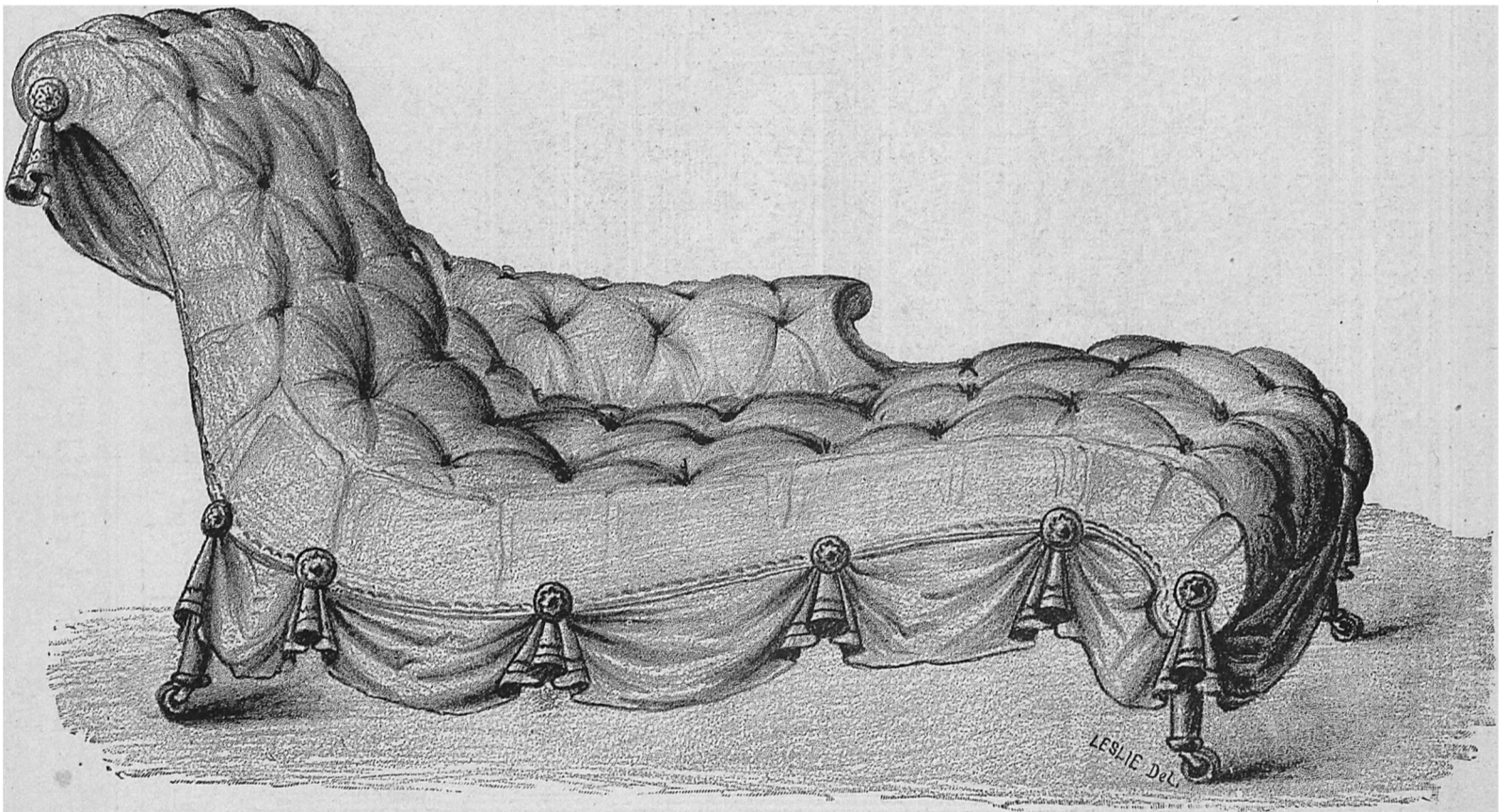
People who fancy they like beautiful rooms, are often careless about small things. They don't seem to take in the logic of decoration. They will cover the dinner table with a satin cloth, trim it with tenderest flowers, accompany it with dainty viands, and conversation of the most esthetic and shallow description, and they will serve the courses with the most brutally-made gold or silver plate, and think it matters nothing to the *coup d'œil*. Half a dozen vulgar little knick-nacks in the "Queen Anne" drawing-room, do not (they think) indicate obtuse mental points. A modern ewer standing in an antique basin, a little like it in color, betrays no ignorance, no blindness to real propriety in effect (they fancy). But far be such terms as "thought" and "fancy" from these folks. Truly, they forget that what they can't see themselves some one else may see; they are mentally what other persons are corporally—slatterns; esthetic slatterns, if you will, but still slatterns. Their imagination has no order or method; they are not quick to perceive, to devise, to remedy; one misplaced thing is left about because uncle brought it there; another, because Mrs. So-and-so gave it, "and we couldn't refuse it, you know!" a third, because it is so utterly sweet; and a fourth, because it got there somehow. Of course uncle has no business to be unesthetic or to forget your common tastes. Mrs. So-and-so is a fool, and must be treated as such; but people have no conscience about gifts. Gifts are occasionally a cheap channel for carting away rubbish, and a certain

At his leisure the master hand will proceed to fill in the details, as he might labor at a sketch till it grows into a finished picture. He will weed the place, sweep out this or that, boldly put in something else, *because* it must be; it is needed by the whole. He will not hesitate to cut or block a window for the sake of the main effect. He will change the place of the door, tear down the cornice, shut off gas or lay it on, dome or diaper the ceiling, repudiate the chimney—it is demanded by the *ensemble*. *N'importe* the expense.

This is why the architect and decorator ought always to be one. They are properly inseparable. No architect can be first-rate without being an artist as well; the artist must build, else the external house might be snipped into patchwork for the sake of his colors and *coups d'œil*.

But it takes a very strong man to work in this way, from the great to the little—to pull off the horse's tail by force. Most people will find it easier to work the other way, pulling hair by hair, from the little to the great. It is easy enough to weed when the roots are small. Let us here leave the "ensemble" view and come to the arrangement in "detail."

Take care, then, as I have before warned my readers, that each object in the room has a fair *raisonnel*. The color of the wall should have a reason; the pattern of the dado—the existence even of a dado—must be able to answer for itself when questioned "Why?" Nothing should be admitted into the room that has no reasonable place



DESIGN FOR SOFA, DRAWN BY OUR ARTIST FROM ORIGINAL PARISIAN SKETCH.

walls, should be selected, the ornamentation of which, whether in embroidery, as suggested in sketch, or not, should be in rich and vivid colors, intermingled with gold and silver threads in graceful outlines.

### ON FURNISHING BEAUTIFULLY.

By MRS. M. E. HAWES.

#### ON DETAILS.

THE slang expression, "That's a detail!" sometimes seems to have the same meaning as the French "*N'importe!*" People will say lightly, "The thing is ugly enough, but that's a detail;" "We were uncomfortable, but that's a detail;" as if details were things quite beside the mark.

This kind of *décousu* mind requires analysing. A word once used in a witty sense becomes meaningless or mischievous when it gets to be used often. And the vital consequence of details has been asserted by a score of philosophers. "Nature exists entire in leasts," was a favorite thought of Swedenborg, quoted by that crowned genius of America, Emerson, and Emerson gives us a translation of the verses of Lucretius (lib. i., 835):

"The principle of all things entrails made  
Of smallest entrails; bone, of smallest bone;  
Blood, of small sanguine drops reduced to one;  
Gold, of small grains; earth, of small sands compacted;  
Small drops of water, sparks to fire contracted."

They are the details that make up the whole. Without the component parts, what becomes of the mass?

old proverb about "gift horses," plainly warns us what we have to expect. No one ought to be forced to give gifts, nor to accept them. But a coming wedding is oftentimes a blessing in more ways than one, and young couples become instantly the general rag-bag and harbors for refuse.

But why are we to ruin our rooms because some one else is making a clearance in theirs? We shall never get the *ensemble* right whilst we neglect the details, and we can never be sure of our details until we have the hardihood to nurse opinions of our own, and the courage to make them clearly known.

#### TWO METHODS.

Let us review the two methods of arranging a room, for they are very different.

We may take the broad view as to *ENSEMBLE*, and the minute one as to *DETAILS*. An artist whose genius is sufficiently strong and sure can take the *ensemble* first, and force the most incongruous elements into harmony with a high hand, as a master rules boys. His treatment will be much like making a grand sketch on canvas or in clay. He will instinctively know what *ought* to be, as well as what will be, the prevailing style of the room, and the prevailing color. He will see at once what tone to work up, what tone to modify and deaden, where this or that thing should stand, what to sacrifice, what to save. He can afford to throw in a few incongruities, or even what under other circumstances would be held blunders. When the *cachet* of the room is forcible enough, little things can afford to wait; they can even be turned to account as "valuable points."

there and no merit of its own. The chairs must at least be able to plead that they are comfortable and not unsightly. The pictures must be worth looking at, or at least must not injure the effect of what they hang against. The cabinets must be ornaments, the carpets serviceable and handsome. Every border must bear scrutiny; every knick-nack must contribute its mite of pleasure; no detail should be overlooked, nor deserve forgiveness.

#### THE SOFA.

This piece of furniture *might* be a lovely ornament; but it seldom is. The ordinary modern sofa is too dropical, and too heavy to move, even when covered in good stuff. The Sheraton sofa, modelled from Greek sources, is hard, angular, ascetic, miserable to rest upon. The one is like many of Gillray's caricatures, grotesque in pudginess and want of anatomy, the other a mere bony skeleton fetched improperly from the grave to lie about luxurious rooms. True, the esthetic put a little stuffing and velvet on their Sheraton here and there; but does a little drapery about the ribs disguise a skeleton or clothe the hollow ribs with flesh? No, they understood sofas in old Greece; they were beds. They understood them at the sybaritic courts of Louis XIV. and Louis XV.; they were soft lounges, but they were pictures, too. Inlaying and carving, gold and paint accentuated forms already refined and beautiful, in the best examples. Much labor was spent on decorating every portion of the frame, and the needle contributed lovely designs to furnish the frames. Gold in varied hues, greenish, reddish